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INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE 1853
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RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1923
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1221
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC 1408
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC 1305
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENCOM MACDILL AFB FL
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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: LIFE ON THE STEPPE, AUGUST 3-7

¶1. This is another in a series of weekly cables drawn mostly from public media, as well as think-tank, NGO, and opposition web-sites, selected to show the diversity of life in Kazakhstan, and information about it available to citizens of Kazakhstan. Our goal is to choose what might interest and be of use to various end-users in Washington and -- especially -- to provide a more complex view from the other side of the world, illustrating the vitality (and sometimes the quirkiness) of discourse available to citizens of Kazakhstan.

KAZAKHSTAN OPENS CONSULATE IN NEW YORK

¶2. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, President Nazarbayev signed a decree on August 4 establishing a Consulate General in New York City, since the volume of consular work done by the Kazakhstani Embassy in the United States has increased dramatically. The Consulate will also promote the trade and economic interests of Kazakhstan.

PRESIDENT NAZARBAYEV CALLS FOR POPULATION INCREASE

¶3. Kazakh television reported that while visiting a maternity hospital on August 4, President Nazarbayev called for a population increase. Nazarbayev, who presented baby strollers to the families of newborn babies, said, "We have a vast territory, but a small number of people. We need to increase our population."

GRASSHOPPERS ATTACK IN AKTOBE

¶4. Aktobe province has spent 63 million tenge (approximately \$420,000) to control increasing numbers of grasshoppers. An August 4 article claimed the grasshoppers "even attacked the central stadium in Aktobe, causing problems for both players and fans."

MICHAEL JACKSON FANS HOLD COMMEMORATION NIGHT

¶5. Almaty fans of Michael Jackson organized a charity event with the Orda Band in memory of "the King of Pop." A video from the event will be sent to Los Angeles for an upcoming memorial concert. Money collected at the event was contributed to the medical care of two-year-old Daniyar Bayshibulov, who suffers from a cardiac defect,

congenital brain problems, and a tumor in both eyes.

HOAGLAND